

NDC Seen Splitting From The Democrats

By DENNIS L. PAJOT

The New Democratic Coalition of Michigan is threatening to become independent. It wants to make the Democratic Party struggle for its 1,200-member strength on equal terms with the Republicans and other political parties.

The state board of the Coalition (NDC) endorsed by a narrow margin Saturday a proposed amendment to the NDC constitution, which calls for dropping all allegiance to the Democratic Party.

ONE PROPOSAL calls for dropping the word "Democratic" from the organization name and making it simply "The New Coalition."

Chairman's Rank: Romneys, Riegle

By DENNIS L. PAJOT

"It's Romney, Mrs. Romney and then Riegle, in that order. After those top three I don't know."

That's the word from Republican State Party Chairman William McLaughlin about favorites for a consensus U.S. Senate candidate.

How about U.S. Congressman Marvin Esch, in whose 2nd District McLaughlin was speaking Thursday? Does he seem to have broad support across the state?

"I really don't know where he'd rank. Congressman Philip E. Ruppe (11th District) seems to have as much going for him in his home area as Esch does down here," said McLaughlin.

Esch is among 25 persons being considered by the party as potential candidates. So, too, is Republican McDonald (R-19th District).

BOTH RUMPE AND McDonald have indicated they are available. Neither asked for his name to be withdrawn when specifically polled by the party. Esch's public utterances indicate he's more than interested. McDonald appears cool.

"Romney and Mrs. Romney, of course have the

all members, was a proposal to become an independent party. Instead, the board adopted a position statement indicating that it would "welcome the emergence of a fourth party" that would reflect NDC goals.

Mrs. Jeanene Havstad of Livonia, a member of the Livonia NDC which endorsed the proposal prior to the state board meeting, introduced them to the board Saturday and fought for their passage.

"We are now going to be much more independent," she told the Observer Newspapers. "I'd just as soon start with a new party."

THE PROPOSALS were born of a Livonia NDC Club meeting called by Ron Hecker, an executive board member and chairman of the regular Livonia Democratic Club, immediately following the

Democratic Party's political reform convention last month. Endorsement of the 19th Congressional District NDC quickly followed and additional strong support was given by NDC members in the 1st, 2nd, 7th, 12th, 15th and 18th Congressional Districts.

These prevailed over opposition from the 6th, 10th and 17th Districts, where the NDC has been more successful in gaining regular party influence.

LEE O'CONNOR, 19th District NDC Chairman, favored the change himself and wrote other proposals aimed at increasing the organizational strength of the state NDC.

As proposed, the changes will allow the NDC to work within either political party or independently. They are a result of strong belief that the Democratic Party is too rigid and not really addressing the

issues of the day," said O'Connor, a Farmington resident.

Paul Endicott, Livonia NDC chairman, said: "We're going independent... The Democratic Party has shown it has no intention of democratizing itself but wants to remain the closed province of those people presently in power."

KEN BURCAW of Plymouth, a vice president of the state NDC and executive board member of the 2nd Congressional District regular Democratic Party organization, finds himself "on the fence."

"I'm not in favor of any form of fourth party. I think the intent is to make us as independent as possible, yet remain in the sphere of the existing party structure. Otherwise, it would make us a liberal organization without any political power at all. This would nullify our reason for existence—to reform the political system..."

Mrs. Havstad disagrees. O'Connor disagrees. Endicott disagrees.

"THE ISSUE IS peace. It has been since 1966. We've tried to get them to realize that since 1966," said Mrs. Havstad.

"We can have an effect outside the party structure. It was done in New York with Lindsay," said O'Connor.

"We can continue to work for peace in the laws that we deem advantageous," said Endicott.

NDC members were unhappy last month when a special Democratic State Convention rejected their pet project—a presidential primary.

Officially, the state board will seek membership endorsement of the proposal:

"To work within political parties as it deems necessary. To consider completely independent political action when possible.

"That the state NDC shall not compromise principles for the sake of political power. Someone at the state board meeting tried to hedge this stance and introduced an amendment that would have continued as a primary NDC thrust "the election of precinct delegates" to the Democratic Party. It failed.

Clothing Drive Set At C'ville

Clarenceville School District will participate in a clothing collection drive for Fair Chance, Inc. (formerly World Clothing Fund) the week of Feb. 23-27.

Fair Chance is an educationally sponsored non-profit organization that will distribute clothing to Appalachia and other needy areas of the United States.

A special appeal is being made this year for children's clothing and shoes. Donated articles should be clean and in good, wearable condition. The organization will provide all packing materials and will pay freight charges.

Donations may be taken to all six Clarenceville schools—senior and junior high, Westford, Edgewood, Batsford and Grandview elementary schools. Needs of any Clarenceville students will be met first with the remainder of the clothing going to Fair Chance.

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THE ISSUE: PEACE—The answer, Mrs. Jeanene Havstad, NDC member in Livonia, believes is to form a liberal "fourth" party to counter the conservative American Independent Party of George Wallace and the "establishment" Democratic and Republican Parties. Daughters Patricia and Suzanne pose with her. (Observer photo by Harry Maethe)

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County Home Rule Issue Being Revived

Wayne County supervisors will take a second look at a county home rule proposition. By a 17-6 vote the 26-member board referred the proposal to its special county reorganization committee Thursday.

The proposition had been recommended by the supervisors' standing general government committee.

The supervisors' general government committee asked that the board place the question on the ballot this fall.

Home rule, basically, would give the county governing body many powers enjoyed by a city, particularly the power to reorganize.

If the proposition were approved, a charter commission would be elected to draft a county home rule charter within the limits established by the Michigan County Home Rule Act of 1966.

The major new feature provided under the act is an elected county executive.

Philip A. Tannan, Detroit, D-Dist. 15, is General Government Committee Chairman.

Board Chairman Albert J. Zak said living costs have risen to the point where many retired county employees "are unable to live in reasonable comfort and dignity."

The pension improvements were negotiated with the major employers' unions.

Township Represented

Improved pensions for Wayne County employees were approved by the County Board of Supervisors Thursday.

The action granted the first major pension improvement in 14 years for county employees, many of whom draw as little as \$50 a month in retirement benefits.

The board of supervisors included \$1.5 million in this year's county budget to finance the improvements from a contemplated effective date of April 1. Cost for a full year will be \$5 million, with \$68,118 coming from the separate road commission budget. Approval by the governor is required.

SOME 2,500 retired employees would benefit immediately. The package provides a 2% increase for every year since the retirement date. An employee who retired in 1945 on \$9 a month would get about \$23 a month more.

Minimum years of service are also reduced, with an em-

REDFORD Mrs. Don Kory, of Redford Township, represented the Republican Women's Federation of Michigan at a meeting of 40 statewide women's groups gathered at Northland Inn recently to formulate Michigan Week plans.

THE COMMITTEE home rule package is specially written by the committee and differs in many ways from a proposal for the same purpose put before the voters in the fall of 1968.

But pressure for county home rule for Wayne county has continued in the forefront with many civic groups actively agitating for it.